by way of removal of those defects, replacement of goods and by way of compensation. The question of prosecution or punishment arises only if these orders are not complied with.

1830. [*Transferred to 18th March* 1994.]

Amendments in the Consumer Protection Act and Standard of Weight and Measures Rule 1977.

1831. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry was considering to bring about amendments in the Consumers Protection Act and Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rule 1977 to safeguard the interests of the consumers; and

(b) if so, the action taken therein so far with details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (1) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was amended on 27-8-93 with a view to enlarging the scope of the Act by including complaints relating to the following for seeking redressal :

(i) restrictive trade practices ;

(ii) goods purchased for self employment;

(iii) goods which are hazardous to life and safety. Further, services relating to "housing construction" have been included in the definition of "services" in the wider interest of the consumers.

(2) The Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules was amended on 26-8-1993 withdrawing the provision on fixing of additional labels on packages. This has been done to prevent exploitation of the consumers by the trade by resorting to fixing price stickers with an enhanced price over and above the sale price declared by the manufacturers.

Plight of Vanaspati Industries in the country

1832. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the plight of the Vanaspati industry in the country with a number of factories having been closed and majority of the remaining units working around 40 per cent of their capacity;

(b) if so, what exercise has been made by Government to identify the cause for growing sickness in the Vanaspati industry in the country; and

(c) what measures are contemplated by Government to revive the closed units and to make the Vanaspati Industry economically viable ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Around 27 per cent of the vanaspati units are at present lying closed.

Overall capacity utilisation of the vanaspati units currently is around 44 per cent.

(b) Some of the causes identified for growing sickness in the vanaspati industry in the country are the disparity in the tax structure between new and existing vanaspati units in certain States, as also between vanaspati and refined oils comparatively reduced availability of raw materials, consumers' preference for refined oils in relation to vanaspati, obsolete nature of the plants and equipment, etc.

(c) Some of the measures taken by the Government to improve the situation are fiscal incentives for use of certain specified oils in the manufacture of vanaspati, reduction in the excise duty on vanaspati by Rs. 400 per M. T. in 1993-94 budget, concessional rate of custom duty on certain